DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 696 CS 014 616

AUTHOR	Ediger, Marlow
TITLE	Reading in the Content Areas.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	9p.
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classics (Literature); *Content Area Reading; Elementary Secondary Education; *Individualized Instruction; *Measurement Objectives; *Problem Solving; *Reading Skills; Student Educational Objectives
IDENTIFIERS	Mandated Tests; *Perennialism

ABSTRACT

Reading in the content areas is a basic in the curriculum. The ability to read well involves a plethora of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Measurement of instruction involves the use of highly specific objectives in reading instruction. With a measurement philosophy of instruction, the following are important to consider: whatever exists, exists in some amount, and this amount can then be measured; achievement in student learning can be measured to determine what has been learned; the standard error of measurement may be determined of the state mandated test; and validity of the states' mandated test may be ascertained with students' results being correlated with results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In problem-solving activities deliberation is involved, and reading is one avenue of securing information to solve the problem. The content chosen from reading must relate directly as a solution to the problem. Individualized procedures of reading instruction emphasize the student as the major person in developing the curriculum. The teacher stimulates and assists in student learning and achievement. Individualizing the reading curriculum is open ended and is quite the opposite of the measurement movement. Perennialism emphasizes students reading the classics to achieve knowledge, skills, and attitudinal objectives of instruction. Reading and reflecting Socratically upon the classics provides students with what will remain in time and space. Reading in the content areas then emphasizes that which is vital and relevant subject matter. (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 467 696

Reading in the Content Areas.

by Marlow Ediger

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. Ediger

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS 014 616

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

READING IN THE CONTENT AREAS

Reading in the content areas is a basic in the curriculum. To learn and achieve optimally in any academic discipline, pupils need to be able to read well. The ability to read well involves a plethora of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. There are numerous components then to the act of reading. Teachers need to be aware of what is involved in pupils learning to read and be able to analyze its specific parts. Reading is a complex whole to describe and it may be analyzed in different ways depending upon the philosophy of the teacher.

Content Reading and the Measurement Movement

Measurement of instruction involves the use of highly specific objectives in reading instruction. These objectives are selected prior to instruction. Precision of objectives is necessary so that the teacher may measure, if after instruction, learners have/have not achieved the stated objectives. If the pupil has not achieved an objective, a different teaching strategy needs to be used. The learning activities in reading are closely aligned with the objectives of instruction. Measurement is emphasized in terms of the stated objectives. Thus, the teacher measures if the pupil has/has not achieved an objective.

With a measurement philosophy of instruction, the following are important to consider:

1. whatever exists, exists in some amount, and this amount then can be measured. The world of science stresses measurability of elements in the universe. The planet earth is made up of some 107 elements and these can be combined to form molecules. Any molecule can be expressed in numerical terms of the number of elements in each. Water, for example, contains two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, resulting in the formula -- H_2 O. The smallest unit of measurement for an element is the atom.
2. achievement in student learning can be measured to determine what has been learned. For example, in state mandated tests, a pupil may be on the composite score of the fiftieth percentile, meaning that fifty percent are below and fifty percent are above that pupil from the total number of individuals who completed taking the test in the pilot study.
3. the standard error of measurement may be determined of the state mandated test. Thus, how consistently the test measures be it split half, alternative forms, or test/retest reliability and may be ascertained statistically with a standard

error of measurement from pilot study data. A pupil's percentile score might then vary plus or minus depending upon the size of the standard error of measurement. Pertaining to one state in the union's test results involving margin of error or standard error of measurement, Keller (Education Week, February 6, 2002) wrote the following:

Montgomery County (Maryland), the state's largest district with 130,000 students, was the first to raise the alarm about the scores. The percentage of students in the district just outside Washington scoring at a satisfactory level dipped last year to 51 percent, abut 4 percentage points lower than the year before.

But state officials have stressed that the margin of error for the scores ranges from 2 percentage points for the state to as many as 14 for a small school.

They also have suggested that the lack of test - score increases may be linked to the fact that schools across the state have more disadvantaged students and fewer experienced teachers.

4. validity of the states' mandated test may be ascertained with pupils' results being correlated with results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). To increase validity, the teacher needs to align the local curriculum with the state standards or objectives of instruction.

It is quite obvious, from the above discussion, that testing pupil achievement stresses preciseness, statistical measurability, and quantification. With the testing and measurement movement, the teacher continually directs the reading activities for pupils in order that predetermined objectives are attained by learners.

Wiersma (1991) wrote the following:

The term statistics has multiple meanings in educational research but probably its simplest meaning is "bits of information." If one says that 632 students are enrolled in a specific school, this can be considered a statistic. The salary schedule and the number of teachers at each salary level for a district are sometimes called salary statistics.

Statistics has a much broader meaning than simply bits of information, however. It also refers to the theory, procedures, and methodology by which data are summarized. It has been suggested that to some people, the terminology of statistics seems like a foreign language; although this may be true, the understanding and use of statistics is not so much a matter of

identifying new terminology and symbols for already known concepts as it is a way of reasoning and drawing conclusions. Although the lay person often views statistics as an accumulation of facts and figures, the researcher sees statistics as the methods used to describe data and make sense out of them.

Content Reading and Problem Solving

Problem solving stresses flexible steps in the identification and finding solutions to a problem (See Dewey, 1916). In context, pupils in a committee setting identify a problem. The problem is open ended and requires a solution. Deliberation is involved in problem solving activities. The problem needs to be clearly defined so it is possible of being solved. This is done in a discussion setting. Reading is one avenue of securing information to solve the problem. The content chosen from reading must relate directly as a solution to the problem. An hypothesis or tentative answer to the problem is developed. The hypothesis is evaluated in a life like situation involving a variety of life like experiences, including reading. If the hypothesis stands up in the evaluation process, it is accepted. If not, a new hypothesis may be developed and evaluated. The steps of problem solving given here are flexible, not an absolute.

Problem solving approaches in learning are based on pupil's experiences, not externally determined objectives of instruction nor from testing. Thus, pupils with teacher guidance are heavily involved in determining and solving the identified problem.

Problem solving emphasizes the following:

1. pupils with teacher guidance helping to determine the curriculum with flexible steps of identifying and securing solutions to problems.
2. pupils being assisted to obtain information to arrive at solutions.
3. pupils being involved in practical learning opportunities.
4. pupils having adequate chances to apply that which has been learned.

Throughout problem solving activities, reading is one experience for learning along with others. School and society are not to be separated, but integrated. What is useful in society provides objectives and experiences in the curriculum. In society, too, committees and groups are involved in problem solving experiences; thus, pupils need to learn to work harmoniously with others in the school setting.

In problem solving philosophy in reading, the teacher assists, encourages, and motivates pupils to engage in the identification and finding solutions to dilemma situations. Evelyn Dewey (1919), daughter of John Dewey, wrote the following:

The development of a democracy demands that nothing be done to interfere with the fluidity of the population: there must be no barriers built between different groups and occupations; everything must be kept as open as possible to promote free and sympathetic communication. This demands common interests among all the people; and the strongest common interests among all the people; and the strongest common interest between people widely separated by space and occupation is the evolution of their government to the satisfaction of them all.

Content Reading and the Individual

Individualized instruction is advocated by selected educators in that optimal opportunities be given to the pupil to select and sequence his/her very own learning activities. Content reading may then be stressed in a personalized reading curriculum. Here, there are an adequate number of content or expository materials from which the pupil may select what to read in a sequential manner. Purposes for reading reside within the learner. The teacher may assist the learner to develop background information for reading by discussing a few illustrations in the library book or related pictures from a CD ROM. Otherwise, motivation for reading comes from within the pupil, not from externally imposed sources. The pupil may reveal comprehension from reading by choosing from the following procedures, among others:

1. writing a summary covering subject matter read.
2. doing a related art project.
3. making objects, such as a diorama, to show main ideas acquired.
4. participating in a dramatization experience to reveal major concepts obtained.
5. video taping a personal research project based on subject matter read in the content areas.
6. cassette recording of expository selections from books being read aloud.
7. planning and implementing a bulletin board display pertaining to thematic books read.
8. having a conference with the teacher to appraise oral

reading and comprehension quality.

9. choosing others to do a mural on collaborative reading completed.

10. self selecting a way to indicate comprehension such as journal writing of ideas acquired by the pupil (See Santman, 2002).

Individualized procedures of reading instruction emphasize the pupil as the major person in developing the curriculum. The teacher stimulates and assists in pupil learning and achievement. Individualizing the reading curriculum is open ended and is quite opposite of the measurement movement. It stresses the importance of the learner being the focal point of instruction. Societal needs are of lesser importance than meeting the needs of the individual pupil. The interests and needs of the pupil come first in developing a reading curriculum. The teacher is a supporter of learning of the pupil. Pupils need to

1. become skillful in the art of choosing and decision making.
2. assume responsibility for decisions made.
3. accept others as having extreme worth.
4. realize self fulfillment in terms of goals, learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures stressed in reading content (Ediger, 1995, p. 153)

.

Content Reading and Perennialism

Perennialism emphasizes pupils reading the classics to achieve knowledge, skills, and attitudinal objectives of instruction. The classics represent literature which has stood the test of time. Recently written literature does not come under the topical heading of the classics. The writings of Plato, Aristotle, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Robert Louis Stevenson, among other examples, represent classical writings. Perennialism stresses a highly academic program of reading. Thus, a stimulating academic reading program needs to be in evidence emphasizing vital, enduring ideas of the past. Cultivation of the intellect or mind becomes a major objective in reading instruction. Pupils need to read and reflect upon worthwhile ideas of great minds and writers of the past whose enduring ideas stimulate thinking. Perennialists believe in pupils reading the classics for the following reasons:

1. they have stood the test of time and place. These writings are still very salient presently.
2. they remain important today whereas recently written

literature may not survive in terms of being salient.

3. they are written by the best of minds.
4. they provide pupils with common background information which all need as general education, before moving on to an area of specialization.

Pertaining to Mortimer Adler's Paideia Proposal (1990), Tanner and Tanner wrote the following:

The perennialist's refusal to consider the nature of the learner in developing the curriculum is reflected in the Paideia Proposal. Instead of seeing childhood and youth as a distinct phase of human development requiring uniquely appropriate experiences for effective growth, childhood and youth are regarded as obstacles to be gotten over with as quickly as possible. "Youth itself is the most serious impediment- fact, youth is an inseparable obstacle to being an educated person," declares the Proposal. The Proposal goes on to call for twelve years of basic schooling for all, capped by the Socratic study of great literary works and other works of art. This kind of learning "aims at raising the mind up from a lesser or weaker understanding to a stronger and fuller one," and the "art of the teacher depends upon an understanding of how the mind learns by the exercise of its own power," declares Adler, as though the mind exists as a separate entity.

Perennialists advocate pupils studying the great ideas of the ancient world, the renaissance, and the age of the enlightenment. These ideas have endured as being worthwhile whereas recent writings may soon end up in oblivion. The changeless and the eternal are to be preferred to the transitory and changing ideas. A non-vocational curriculum needs to be in evidence. Vocational and professional training comes after the great ideas of the past have been studied. Reading and reflecting Socratically upon the classics provides pupils with what will remain in time and space. Reading in the content areas then emphasizes that which is vital and relevant subject matter.

With different philosophies of instruction, it behooves the teacher to study each diligently and come up with what will assist pupils individually to achieve as optimally as possible.

References

Dewey, John (1916) Democracy and Education. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Dewey, Evelyn (1919), New Schools for Old: The Regeneration of the Porter School. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, p. 336.

Ediger, Marlow (1995), Philosophy in Curriculum Development. Kirksville, Missouri: Simpson Publishing Company, p. 153.

Keller, Bess (February 6, 2002), "Controversy Surrounds Release of Maryland Test Results," Education Week, 21 (21), p19.

Santman, Donna (2002), "Teaching to the Test?: Test Preparation in the Reading Workshop," Language Arts, 79 (3), 203- 211.

Tanner, Daniel, and Laurel Tanner (1990), History of the School Curriculum. New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, p. 133.

Wiersma, William (1991), Research Methods in Education. Fifth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 306- 307.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

CS 014 616

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Reading in the Content Areas	
Author(s): Dr. Marlow Ediger	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: 3-5-02

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☒

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Marlow Ediger

Organization/Address: Dr. Marlow Ediger, Professor Emeritus
Truman State University
201 W. 22nd, Box 417
North Newton, KS. 67117

Printed Name/Position/Title: Marlow Ediger, Prof. Emer.

Telephone: 316-283-6283 FAX:

E-Mail Address: Date: 3-5-02

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC/REC
2805 E. Tenth Street
Smith Research Center, 150 140
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47408

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2000)